

## REDUCING CHILD POVERTY IN CALIFORNIA:

### The Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Task Force

Assembly Bill 1520 (Chapter 415, Statutes of 2016) directed the California Department of Social Services to convene The Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Task Force. The purpose of the Task Force is development of recommendations to reduce child poverty rates, especially deep child poverty.

The Task Force will issue its final report by **November 1, 2018**. This report is intended to be a high-level policy document to inform the next Administration and the Legislature.

Recommendations should consider **four overarching issues**:

1. **The California economy** must be healthy, and jobs have to be available and pay a living wage. This includes consideration of issues like the predictability of hours and shifts, the effect of automation, and the digital and service economies.
2. **Employability** – Employment provides the most sustainable route out of poverty, requiring:
  - a. Job skills, transition and barrier removal services, subsidized employment/apprenticeships, and child care for adults in workless households currently experiencing deep poverty
  - b. Apprenticeships, skills gateways and supportive services for childless young people not in employment, education or training
  - c. Educational attainment for school-age youth, including enrichment opportunities.
3. **Housing** has to be available in areas accessible to where jobs are available.
4. **The Early Years** – Early childhood experiences are crucially important, requiring:
  - a. Availability of maternal and child health care
  - b. Availability of income and other basic supports
  - c. Good parenting by birth parents or alternative caregivers
  - d. Child development in and out of the home.

In addition, the intervention strategies recommended by the Task Force must recognize that poverty is the major social determinant of health and mental health, must be addressed holistically for families, and that families living in deep poverty frequently experience toxic levels of stress requiring extended periods of recovery.

Consequently, the Task Force Report must, at a high level:

1. Define the problem;
2. Identify the root causes;
3. Settle on the major interventions and strategies that could be employed, and recommend priorities to utilize for greatest impact;
4. Recognize interconnections between interventions;
5. Account for what is already invested;
6. Be specific in terms of priority populations for interventions; and
7. Be specific about what entities/agencies should be responsible for implementing those interventions.

In addition, the Task Force recommendations should include steps that the next Administration should consider:

- Insistence on return on investments and results, and being prepared to change existing roles and responsibilities, if necessary, to achieve these goals.
- Regular and scheduled measurement of progress towards goals.
- To the extent exogenous factor (Federal program or budget changes, economic downturns, etc.) requires goals/targets to be reset, that should be transparent.